

Program Notice

FGIS PN-03-03

09/5/03

WALK-THROUGH SAFETY INSPECTIONS AT GRAIN ELEVATORS

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this notice is to clarify the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) policy regarding walk-through safety inspections at grain elevators.

2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This action is effective upon receipt.

3. BACKGROUND

It is GIPSA policy to provide a safe and healthful work environment for all its employees, and to eliminate employee exposure to existing and potentially hazardous working conditions. Accordingly, GIPSA employees routinely conduct walk-through safety inspections at grain elevators where GIPSA provides onsite service. The purpose of these inspections is to identify and correct hazardous conditions in a timely manner.

4. POLICY

- a. GIPSA representatives^{1/}, designated by the local field office manager, must conduct walk-through safety inspections at grain elevators served by the local field office, at least once during each workday; i.e., a day in which GIPSA employees are providing onsite inspection/weighing services at the elevator.
- b. During walk-through inspections, the grain elevators must be checked for those conditions that may pose a safety risk to GIPSA personnel, including:
 - (1) Fires (including persons smoking), smoldering grain, or visible smoke,
 - (2) Toxic chemical spills,
 - (3) High concentrations of suspended or accumulated dust,
 - (4) Welding, torch cutting, or other hot work,
 - (5) Compressed air being used to remove dust from walls and other areas,

^{1/} GIPSA supervisor, collateral duty safety and health officer, agricultural commodity grader, or agricultural commodity technician who is knowledgeable in the lay out and operation of the grain elevator and able to identify potentially hazardous conditions.

- (6) Bearings on bucket elevators running hot, slipping belts, and choked legs,
 - (7) Unapproved electrical equipment, loose or damaged electrical conduits, frayed wires, and electrical sparking, and
 - (8) Hazardous walkways, inadequate lighting, defective ladders and stairs, missing guard rails, blocked stairways, and any other potentially hazardous condition.
- c. The scope of the walk-through inspection will depend on the size and complexity of the elevator, and the location of the elevator relative to the GIPSA onsite laboratory. However, every walk-through inspection must include a general inspection of the primary grain handling areas and known problem areas.
 - d. Prompt and appropriate action must be taken if hazardous conditions are found during a walk-through inspection. See GIPSA Directive 4790.9, "Policy and Procedures Upon Encountering Hazardous Conditions," for additional information.

NOTE: GIPSA is not responsible for the safety and health of non-Federal inspection and weighing personnel. Therefore those persons are not required to comply with GIPSA safety and health procedures. Further, GIPSA does not have the authority to enforce safety and health rules for employees of private facilities where GIPSA employees work.

5. FILING INSTRUCTIONS

File a copy of this notice with GIPSA Directive 4790.9, "Policy and Procedures Upon Encountering Hazardous Conditions," until this directive is updated to reflect this policy.

6. QUESTIONS

Direct questions to the Safety and Issuance Management Branch at (202) 720-0244.

/s/ David Orr

David Orr, Director
Field Management Division